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LETTER

OF

HON. WHITING GRISWOLD,

IN REPLY TO THE

Speech of Hon. Benjamin F. Butler,

Delivered at Lowell, May 15, 1860, on the Proceedings of
the Charleston Convention.

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L E T T E R.



HON. BENJAMIN F. BUTLER :

DEAR SIR :—I have read with much care and deep interest, your speech delivered at Huntington Hall, Lowell, May 15, upon the proceedings of the late Charleston Convention. Occupying as you do, the position of leader and representative of the Democratic party of Massachusetts, having been our last democratic candidate for Governor, and being also a delegate to the Charleston Convention, and an active and efficient member of the Committee on Resolutions, much importance will of course be justly attached at home and abroad to any thing you may say or do, in the present crisis of our political affairs.

My long and intimate acquaintance with you, my high appreciation of you as a lawyer, a statesman, and a man, leads me to distrust my own conclusions, when they conflict with those deliberately formed by you. Although your speech bears the marks of preparation and care, and has, I know, received a wide circulation, I am unwilling to let the result at which you arrived pass as the voice and feeling of the democracy of the State, without a protest, however weak and humble the source from which it emanates. It has never, I think, been our misfortune to differ but once before on any question of magnitude and importance. As Senatorial delegates from Massachusetts to the Cincinnati Convention, one of us favored, the other opposed, the nomination of Mr. Buchanan. It is only necessary to say, that it was then as now, I trust, an honest difference, and that each was then, as now, governed by an honest and conscientious desire to do his duty.

Of that portion of your address which relates to your

action in the Convention upon the subject of the Platform, I have nothing to say, except in approval. It is upon other points, and mainly growing out of considerations connected with the candidates to be nominated, that I take issue with you. But I trust I do it in no spirit of factious fault-finding, or carping distrust; but with a view to ascertain, if possible, and act upon, the best policy for our party and the country.

Coming then, directly to what I deem objectionable in your address—you say that in your belief, the “difference” in the Convention, “was about *men*, and not *principles*.” If this be so, why do you claim so much credit, why do you devote the larger portion of your speech in stating and justifying your record and action in the Convention, in defense of the *Platform*, the *Principles* of the party? If there was no difference about principles, if in reality all was harmony here, if the South did not secede upon the matter of Platform, of Principles, then why the long controversy in which you bore so honorable a part in the Committee, and in the Convention, relative to the Platform? Why the “reply,” the “retort,” the “return,” which you say you gave to the “taunt,” the “gibe,” and the “blow” from southern delegates?

I fear you are mistaken here. With your acknowledged sagacity, acumen, and usual fairness, I fear you have fallen into a fatal error on this point. I give you more credit for your action upon the matter of the Platform, than you claim. I prefer to believe that your eloquent tongue, and acute intellect, were exerted in no ordinary cause; that you was engaged in no child’s play; no ruse to deceive; no mere ostensible pretext, to cover up the real object to be accomplished. I prefer to believe that you was standing up for the right, for principles, for a Platform which has stood the test of time; and the severest scrutiny, which has carried our party through many a conflict and crisis; a Platform which was unjustly assailed in the house of its friends. And I am forced also to believe that a portion of the southern delegates seceded upon a real difference in opinion, and upon a determination to incorporate a new plank into our party creed.

As a general thing, I prefer to believe that men act from honest motives, and mean what they say. If the resolutions of Hon. Jefferson Davis, which have agitated the country, and passed the Senate; if the slave code resolutions at Charleston; if all the objections to non-intervention by Congress, which come up just now from

the South, is a mere pretext, a cover, a delusion, an unnecessary farce to blind the country; if in fact, the whole difference which is leading to secession, disruption, and disunion, is simply about *men*, is simply whether this or that *man* shall be the nominee at Baltimore, without regard to the *principles* which will shape his administration, then have I been too simple and confiding; then have I overrated the *honor* and *sincerity* of southern statesmen.

Again you say—"The passage of this resolution, [the two-thirds rule] made the nomination of Judge Douglas simply impossible." But how impossible? You admit he received "upon one ballot a bare majority of the whole vote." [The official report shows that he received a majority upon a series of ballots.] You allude to the anti-Douglas minorities which were stifled in New York, Ohio, Indiana, and Minnesota, by the unit rule; but you do not speak, except in general terms, of those States where Douglas minorities were stifled by the same rule. Nor do you give sufficient facts to show which side gained or lost most by this rule. I agree to what you strongly intimate, that the rule itself is unjust and wrong. I was opposed to it in our Democratic State Convention which preceded the Cincinnati Convention, when this same unit rule was adopted on your motion. And you certainly will not soon forget that it was not till after a most severe and protracted discussion of several days and nights, in our delegation at Cincinnati, that the rule was discarded, and myself and those who acted with me, allowed to vote for Mr. Buchanan from the start; and at first, against the majority of our delegation. And it was our few votes which gave Mr. Buchanan a bare majority on the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth ballots, which closed the proceedings of the fourth day, and resulted in his nomination on the second ballot the next morning; and that too on the very ground as stated by Mr. Preston of Kentucky; that he had received a majority on a series of ballots.

You say, "It was evident to all that more than one-third of the Convention was unalterably opposed to his [Douglas] nomination." But how could you *know* that? It was undoubtedly your honest opinion. But you are not infallible! for it was equally your honest opinion openly expressed the night before Mr. Buchanan was nominated, that he never could carry two-thirds of the Convention, yet when it was found that the majority of the Convention were in earnest and unyielding for Mr. Buchanan, Tennessee which had voted the last eight times for Mr. Douglas,

broke the opposing column; and cast her twelve votes for Mr. Buchanan, which secured his immediate nomination. Had a few more men been as true to Mr. Douglas as some of us were to Mr. Buchanan; especially had more of the delegates from Massachusetts, perhaps in feeling *one* of the strongest Douglas states in the Union; how can you say that the South, that Tennessee herself would not have yielded now as they did then? Nay, how do you know that if during the nearly twenty ballots in which Judge Douglas had 151½ votes, [lacking a half vote of a majority,] you had yourself cast that half vote for him; instead of withdrawing your vote; and, as I am informed you did; at the very time when you found he was receiving a majority, and was likely to be nominated, how do you know I say, that you yourself might not have been instrumental in his nomination? Can there be any doubt, that if the whole Massachusetts delegation had expressed the wishes of their constituents, had uttered the unmistakable voice of nine-tenths of her democracy, and cast the whole vote of the State for Mr. Douglas, thus securing him a clear majority on fifty-seven successive ballots; can there be any doubt I say, that he would have received the nomination at Charleston? I think not.

If there can be any doubt that such would have been the result, then is there a conspiracy among the delegates, in violation of every usage and principle of the party, and of democracy, as cruel and wicked as that of the more than forty men who bound themselves under a curse, that they would neither eat or drink, until they had slain Paul. And if such is the fact, some men will have a long account to settle with their constituents; some men will tremble at the "judgment to come" when the democracy shall review their conduct, worse than did the treacherous Felix under the reasonings of the eloquent apostle.

You speak of "coming from a State where there is *no hope* of a democratic electoral vote." Is it not about time to dismiss this dirge and take a brighter view of Massachusetts politics? We in the country, have long looked to you with hope and confidence, as one who would discountenance every influence calculated to "keep the party conveniently small," as one who would seize the first "golden opportunity," who would take the ebb tide, when setting so strongly towards popular favor, and lead us to success, to victory. "*No hope!*" Surely if the voice of the democracy of the State is to be stifled, if ideas and principles once coldly received, but now growing into

favor even here are to be discarded, if the man of the time, a man who has never faltered in the cause of democracy, never swerved from the true principles of the party, a man who combines more of the elements of success, and power, of courage, political integrity, true statesmanship, and popular favor, than any man since Andrew Jackson, is to be assassinated by his professed friends, then you may well exclaim as you do, "*no hope!*" But had you clung to Douglas with the same tenacity that you did to his principles, and with the same success, in the present state of parties, and political feeling in Massachusetts, I should not despair of your election as governor, this very fall.

I have examined with great care your reasons why Judge Douglas "ought not to be nominated," as well as the "reasons which render Douglas hopeless as a candidate." I will allude to these reasons briefly :

You say the South is "opposed to Judge Douglas even to a disruption of the party." I do not believe it. If you mean by the South, a self-constituted clique of men, seeking their private revenge; if you mean by the South, the men who seceded from the Charleston Convention on account of the adoption of the Cincinnati Platform, and who upon mature reflection, shall insist upon maintaining that position; if you mean that class of men who advocate the dissolution of the Union in the event of a certain contingency; if you mean the men who deliberately discard to-day the doctrine of non-intervention which they proposed and enforced four years ago, you may be right. But I deny that one or all these classes, represent the South. I believe that the great Union-loving, conservative, national mass of the southern people remain true to the Cincinnati Platform, and that when the issue is made up, and they are called upon to decide between Douglas and Lincoln, between non-intervention and the Wilmot proviso, they would rally under the standard of Judge Douglas, as they have done for no man since the "hero of New Orleans." His nomination would be no disruption of the party, it would only be sloughing off a few hot-headed, hair-brained, political exeresences, who have been only a curse to the party for years.

But, you say, Douglas ought not to be nominated "with every democratic free state voting against him." Is not Illinois a "democratic free state"? Yet she did not vote against him. Is it not the most reliable of all the Democratic States north or south? Is it not the star that never sets? But why is it that we have, as you justly

intimate so few northern states reliable for the Democracy? Do you believe it necessary to so administer this government, that no northern state can be rallied to its support? If I thought so, I should almost despair of the Union. Was it so under the administrations of Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Jackson and Polk? And do you now propose to abandon the only man, who can, with any degree of certainty, restore the northern democratic column to its ancient line, and that too without violating an iota of our platform, or encroaching a little upon the constitutional rights of the South? What policy could be adopted so short-sighted, so suicidal to the whole country, to the Union itself?

You admit that Judge Douglas is the "first choice" of the people of your district: and you proceed to pay him a most true, eloquent, and deserved tribute; for which I thank you; as I doubt not do the democracy of the whole state. But by what twist of logic; by what mode of reasoning, you in the same breath deduce, from his "ability, untiring energy, parliamentary, and executive capacity" his unfitness for this nomination; will puzzle your readers to decipher. You say "it is not that we love Cæsar less, but Rome more." But how in this instance can you better show your love of Rome, than by advancing the interests of Cæsar? By your own showing no man is a better representative of the true idea of American Democracy than Mr. Douglas; and you may be sure that "Rome will howl," if this great and patriotic exponent of her principles is disowned at Baltimore.

You say you "found Judge Douglas' nomination an impossibility without a disruption of the party, and throwing away all chance of success." The record is against you: the "disruption" took place before the balloting commenced; and upon a difference as to the platform; not as to the candidate. If you could persist in adhering to the Cincinnati Platform, even to a "disruption of the party," and after it took place, could you not after the breach was made, be at least consistent, and put upon that platform, its best and truest exponent? Why was it so criminal to adhere to Douglas for *fear* his name *might* make a disruption; when you insisted upon the platform, which you *knew would*, and *did* produce disruption? I cannot understand this kind of logic. Is there any "cat under the meal?" Is not the very object of rejecting Douglas, to get a candidate, so silent and non-committal upon *the question of the day*, that he may be elected; and then show his colors, in defiance of all platforms of non-intervention? This if any thing,

in my opinion, would be "throwing away all chance of success." The rejection of Douglas under the circumstances, would I fear, with all candid men, be construed as a rejection of his doctrine of non-intervention; and where is the northern state which could be caught by the shallow pretence of a different construction?

You say you "found a very large majority of the Democratic States, unalterably opposed to him." [Douglas.] What do you mean by democratic States? States in favor of a slave code; States which connive at secession, disruption, and in a certain event, disunion itself; States which discard the well settled principles of the party? If so, then are you correct; if any such States can be found, which I very much doubt. But if Douglas were to be nominated, would not Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, New York, and the other Northern States, which would rush to his standard, with majorities unknown before, be democratic States? Let us understand each other, and the terms we use. Must we relinquish our fidelity to principle, be forced to support men and measures which will render us powerless throughout the North; and then be taunted because we can show no Northern Democratic States? For one I enter my protest in advance against this damnable policy.

You say you "found him [Douglas] in a bitter feud with a democratic administration." This is a mistake. Judge Douglas is in no feud with a democratic administration. He has pursued one course, and that straight forward. He has not turned aside to attack or malign the administration, or any one else. In defence of our platform and principles, he has defied all opposition, come from whatever source it might; but he is engaged in no quarrels, no feuds. In his late masterly and unanswerable speech in the Senate, he expressly disclaimed all animosity to those who differed from him; nay, more, he tendered to our party Mr. Buchanan's letter of acceptance, or Vice President Breckenridge's address at Lexington, accepting the nomination, as a Platform, without the dotting of an i, or the crossing of a t. Does this look like being engaged in "a bitter feud with a democratic administration?"

You "found also that Judge Douglas was in opposition to almost the entire democratic majority of the Senate of the United States," and "opposed by a large majority of the democratic members of the House of Representatives." But whence does that opposition spring? Can it

not all be traced to his opposition to any departure from the platform of the party; to the introduction into our party creed of the new plank, the slave code so-called? Is it not based upon his refusal to abandon the long established landmarks of the party? Is it not owing to his adhesion to principle; his unfaltering advocacy of the Cincinnati Platform; his refusal to change front on a question vital to the integrity and honor of our party, to the success of our cause, and the stability of the Union itself? Can you point to any other even alleged fault in his views and position? Is not this the sum of his guilt? You are an eminent criminal lawyer; I would like to see you undertake to draw up and put on record the political crimes of Stephen A. Douglas. Your allegations would rest in invention alone, and not in facts. How then can these groundless charges against him induce you to oppose his nomination? You, who achieved such honorable distinction at Charleston in defence of the same principles; and like Judge Douglas in the very teeth of the slave code Southern opposition? Is it as you say, "no matter who is right or who is wrong?" Is this the code of political morals to which you invite the democracy of Massachusetts? Is this the "defence" you endeavored to make when "the democracy of the old Bay State" was misrepresented? Did it occur to you, that almost every one of the objections you bring against the nomination of Judge Douglas, applies with equal force against your own patriotic and honorable effort at Charleston in defence of the Cincinnati Platform? Did you not see that you yourself was thus, if any body, in "a bitter feud with a democratic administration;" that you was "in opposition to the almost entire democratic majority of the Senate," and a very large majority of what you allege to be "democratic States?" and that you insisted upon your platform even to "a disruption of the party?" Now I believe you have too much honor to allow another to fall under an imputation, which you would not permit to rest upon yourself under like circumstances.

Lastly, "and more than all," you "found that the Clerk of the House of Representatives was openly quoted as saying, that the influential paper controlled by him, would either support Douglas or Seward, thus making himself apparently an unpleasant connecting link between them." Col. Forney's Press is among my list of papers, and I have read it with some care, and whatever he may be "quoted as saying," I have seen no such determination expressed

in his paper. But suppose it were so, how many "influential papers" and influential men, who are willing to support Douglas and the Cincinnati Platform, can you drive from our ranks by a slave code, or a candidate who will prove an equivalent, and carry the election? You seem to forget that the election may, and probably will turn upon a few nicely balanced Northern States, where a breach of good faith, a departure from established usage and principle, an unpardonable onslaught upon a man who is to-day the unquestioned choice for President, of the great mass of the American Democracy, will prove fatal to our cause. But while you are shocked at this "unpleasant connecting link" between Douglas and Seward, you have no word of censure for our Southern brethren, who talk disunion by the month, and some of whom openly declare, that they would rather see Lincoln than Douglas elected President.

In conclusion you say you voted "for Jefferson Davis of Mississippi." Among the chief reasons for this vote was the fact that he assisted Massachusetts in securing her "just dues," which she ought to have had and which Mr. Davis if within his power, ought to have obtained for her years before. Now I have nothing to say against Mr. Davis. Massachusetts thanks him for his exertions in doing tardy justice to our State. Mr. Davis is a man of courage, a statesman of the extreme Southern sectional school, honest I doubt not, and patriotic in his views. But it is a curious fact, that, after the long struggle, so honorable to you, in favor of non-intervention, you should select as a candidate the only prominent statesman, almost in the country, who never indorsed the Cincinnati Platform, who entered his protest in the outset, against the great doctrine of popular sovereignty in the territories. You may be able to reconcile his course of action in your own mind. I cannot do it myself.

Well do you inquire, "what is to be done at Baltimore?" You argue that because Mr. Van Buren was set aside in 1844, for Mr. Polk, after having received a majority of the convention on one ballot, Douglas can be now. But there is no parallel between the two cases, and there will be none between the results. Mr. Van Buren had been President one term, and had received the nomination again, and been defeated by the people. But Douglas has never been nominated, much less defeated. But the great and fatal objection to Mr. Van Buren in 1844, and the cause of his defeat in the convention, was his previous

committal in writing against the annexation of Texas, that being the great question upon which both the nomination and election turned, just as non-intervention is the great question upon which the nomination and election will now turn. The annexation of Texas was the party creed, and watchword, the main plank in the Platform of 1844. Popular sovereignty in the territories, non-intervention by Congress, was in 1856, and is now the main plank, the party watchword, which has and will rally the conservative, union-loving masses of the American democracy. The reason which rendered Mr. Van Buren unavailable in 1844, is the very reason why Mr. Douglas is the *most* available candidate in 1860. Could Polk have been elected if he had been opposed to the annexation of Texas, or even non-committal on the subject? Your own good judgment will answer the question. So no man can now be elected, who is either openly against the doctrine of popular sovereignty, or who is suspected of being unreliable on the subject.

Where, to-day, are the prominent democratic names, which during the last few months have been mentioned in connection with the Presidency? Buchanan, Breckenridge, Guthrie, Hunter, Wise, Lane, Davis, Cobb, Toucy and others, either of which but for their supposed complicity with this question, would rally the masses, would strike a chord which would vibrate throughout the Union. But one after another has been dropped, till all have disappeared. And why is this? Because everybody knows that no northern state can be carried against this long established, well-settled and never to be abandoned democratic principle. And what is the use of commencing a canvass with the absolute certainty that every northern State will be arrayed against us? And especially with the fact before us that our opponents have nominated an honest, able and popular man.

Can then Mr. Douglas be overslaughed at Baltimore and the party succeed? As you have frankly stated your opinion, I will venture mine. I give it as my deliberate opinion, formed upon much reflection, and a careful survey of the whole field, that he cannot, should the party be rash enough to attempt it. A very few months will test the comparative soundness of our conclusions. I apprehend it is no matter who else is nominated, no matter what professions he may make, or what assurances he may give, the country will understand, the people, quick to discern, will see, that in the rejection of Mr. Douglas,

popular sovereignty, non-intervention, is discarded. They will see and believe that the great principle to which an anxious republic were looking to save the country, from the "irrepressible conflict," now going on, between the extremes of the North and South; a conflict which is driving us every hour nearer to the black and bottomless gulf of disunion, is all at once discarded and abandoned by its authors. The shock will be instantaneous and tremendous. It will be like throwing overboard the pilot, and with him the compass and chart while sailing among rocks on a lee shore.

No: the whole trouble lies within a narrow compass; and the sooner we face the danger, the sooner we grapple with the real difficulty, the better. It must be done, or inevitable disgrace and defeat awaits the party. It is no pleasant task for me to find fault with a democratic administration, especially one which I bore a humble part in establishing. But those who know the part I took at Cincinnati in securing Mr. Buchanan's nomination, will agree that I have a right, if any body, to speak of his administration. But without saying a word about other points in the course and policy of Mr. Buchanan; he has made *one mistake*; a mistake fatal to him, fatal to this part of his administration, fatal to all who uphold and justify the act. It is not a blunder, it is a crime. I refer to the Lecompton policy of the administration. No man, can be elected President who took any part in this scheme, or who is supposed directly or indirectly to connive at or uphold it. It is useless to argue the question, to enumerate facts; it is understood, and settled in the public mind, North, South, East and West. It is this departure from the Cincinnati Platform; this departure from the Democratic National Platforms, of '48, '52, '56, and from the resolutions, letters and speeches of nearly all the democratic states, and statesmen in the country, which has made all this trouble and division. Mr. Douglas was one of the very few prominent democratic statesmen, sagacious enough to see, and honest and courageous enough to act, up to the crisis.

Had Mr. Buchanan followed what I believe to have been the dictates of his own better judgment; had he adhered to the platform which he accepted as the chart of his administration; had he held fast to the doctrine as stated in his letter of acceptance, and inaugural address; had he disowned and denounced the Lecompton constitution, as the vile progeny of a bastard origin, instead of claiming it as

the legitimate offspring of the Cincinnati Platform; and kicked it in disgrace from the White House, as a thing which Kansas hated, which the North abhorred, and the South despised; he would have been renominated by acclamation, and elected by a majority such as Jackson never saw in his most popular triumphs. It is now too late for him, but not for the party. One chance remains, and that is a most glorious chance; a "golden opportunity," as it would settle all party controversy for national supremacy for years to come. What are all the emoluments of office, compared with the triumph of principle? What are all the custom houses, and petty post offices, which for a *consideration* are vying with each other in unprincipled rivalry, to defeat the man whose generous impulses led him to withdraw in 1856, in favor of Mr. Buchanan? Should Douglas be nominated at Baltimore, the enthusiasm, the uprising of the people, the popular furor which would spring up all over the country in his behalf, would surpass any thing in the previous history of our country, just in proportion as power and pelf, as detraction and slander have been employed to destroy his reputation, would be the popular enthusiasm and verdict in his favor. Corrupt cliques would disband, disunion would hide its ghastly form, and all sectional controversy would gradually cease; men of extreme views both North and South would disappear from public life, while their places would be filled by more moderate, conservative, sound national men. It is the politicians who are now at work; the unpurchased masses will soon speak; and if to ratify the nomination of Douglas, they will come in legions, as

"The waves come, when navies are stranded;
As the leaves come, when forests are rended."

One word to the democracy of the South, before I close. You have reached a crisis in the history of the party, and of the Union. Your action at Baltimore will be fraught with momentous results for good or evil. If you abandon the doctrine of popular sovereignty; or what will I fear prove equivalent to it; if you abandon and discard Mr. Douglas, its truest and ablest exponent: it will be a fatal step to you. The democracy of the North have been subjected to the odium consequent in this section upon the repeal of the Missouri Compromise line; have borne the denunciations of the pulpit and the press; have been driven into hopeless minorities all over the North; have fallen one after another in defence of the constitutional rights of the

South, until their bleaching bones whiten every state and district north of Mason and Dixon's line. And now just as the principle of self-government, just as popular sovereignty, the substitute for an arbitrary line, is becoming popular at the North, just as the country begins to see that this doctrine is likely to prove the only safe, and constitutional solution of the slavery question—if this plank is to be taken from under our feet, and we are to be left without any safe and solid foundation on which to stand; the time will come, and that soon, when you will want, nay *implore* in vain, the aid of your northern allies. That aid cannot be secured upon dishonorable terms. We have taken our position, and cannot recede from it without disgrace, dishonor, and defeat. You can come to us, without any sacrifice on your part, of principle, of honor, or self-respect.

If the South after all, are not sincere in the solemnly expressed and reiterated statement of their desire to banish forever the discussion of the subject of slavery from the Halls of Congress; if they are determined to renew and perpetuate the agitation of this inflammable subject; if instead of leaving the whole matter where the Cincinnati Platform and the Constitution leave it, to the people of the states and territories; if you are determined to array congressional protection against the Wilmot proviso, and to adapt yourselves to the other extreme of the same doctrine which you denounce in northern republicans; if by pressing the slave code, you make the democratic a mere sectional party, make it subject to the same objection which you denounce in our political opponents; if you threaten a dissolution of the Union in the event of the election of a republican president, and then insist upon the course best calculated to produce that contingency, it will take no prophet's ken to foresee the danger that ~~some~~ hundreds of thousands of voters now willing to abide the Cincinnati Platform, and stand upon the doctrine of non-intervention by Congress, driven from this safe, sound, and constitutional plank, ~~who~~ would, if forced to adopt the doctrine of Congressional intervention, following their natural instincts for freedom, take the side of liberty against slavery, and do all in their power to prevent by Congressional laws all farther extension of an institution which the fathers of the Republic without distinction of party, were forced to admit was a political, moral, and social evil. Will you drive the North, will you drive the country to this alternative? Better a thousand fold

for you, for us, for the peace of the country, and the stability of the Union, to leave the whole subject where the Constitution, the Cincinnati Platform, and a sound national policy leave it, to the laws of God, of nature, of climate, of soil, to the local, civil laws of each State and Territory, and to this result it must come at last. In defiance of senatorial resolutions, or congressional and cabinet caucuses, of slave codes and Wilmot provisos, the bold, hardy and enterprising pioneers who people the new territories, will settle the question for themselves, and shape their own domestic institutions, independent of congressional intervention, and foreign dictation, and the more this theory is discussed, the more popular it will become, because it is founded in the inalienable rights of man. The principle of self-government is as old as human liberty. It has been baptized in blood, and nurtured by uncounted sacrifice of toil, of treasure, and of life, the world over.

Under the flag of non-intervention, with Douglas as its standard-bearer, we can achieve a victory which will reinforce and strengthen the democratic party, effectually quell the spirit of disunion, and kindle all over the country new hopes in the stability and perpetuity of the Union. But discard the doctrine of non-intervention, or nominate a man satisfactory to the slave code secessionists, and you will kindle anew and in earnest the "irrepressible conflict," and if, (which God forbid,) it should ever end in civil war, anarchy and disunion, you will not fail to remember, that it was your own short-sighted folly, which brought the disaster upon you and us.

And now, my dear sir, let me say in conclusion, that while I do not flatter myself that the suggestions which I have made, will carry with them much personal weight and importance; allow me to hope that the suggestions themselves, may receive your serious consideration, and have some influence in determining your course at Baltimore, which I trust will be such as to reflect the wishes of your constituents, of the Democracy of the State, and the wishes of the great mass of the Democracy of the Union,

And believe me as ever

Very sincerely your friend,

W. GRISWOLD.

Greenfield, June 8, 1860.

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